

## Statement on Holder Contempt Vote Walk-Out

Written by Mike Honda  
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Today, I joined my Democratic colleagues in a walk-out protest of the politically-motivated and partisan House contempt vote against Attorney General Eric Holder. In its history, the United States House of Representatives has never held a United States Attorney General, or any other Cabinet official, in contempt. House Republicans are participating in an election-year witch hunt despite the fact that the Department of Justice has made extraordinary efforts to accommodate Congress by turning over almost 8,000 documents – including all the documents that relate to the tactics in this operation and the other flawed operations that occurred in Arizona during the Bush Administration.

Contempt power should be used sparingly, carefully and only in the most egregious situations, yet the Republican Leadership has articulated no legislative purpose for pursuing this course of action. Even the Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Darrell Issa, a Republican, has acknowledged that there is no evidence that Attorney General Holder authorized condoned, or knew about the “Fast and Furious” operation.

I believe Agent Brian Terry and his family deserve justice and that a true investigation should be mounted to ensure that this never happens again. Unfortunately, House Republicans have refused 10 different requests from Democrats for a hearing with Ken Melson, the former director of the ATF—the agency in charge. Similarly, they have also refused to call former Attorney General Mukasey, who was personally briefed on the interdiction efforts during the Bush Administration, to testify about the program.

As a Member of the Appropriations subcommittee on Commerce Justice Science, I cannot in good conscience give credence to this action by casting a vote. The memory of Agent Terry deserves true justice, not an election-year circus.